

NEWS ALERT



U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Homeland Security Committee

Rep. Bennie G. Thompson, Chairman



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Statement of Chairman Bennie G. Thompson “Understanding the Budget and Strategic Agenda of the Science and Technology Directorate”

February 14, 2007 (WASHINGTON) – Today, Committee on Homeland Security Chairman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) delivered the following prepared remarks for the Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology Subcommittee Hearing entitled “Understanding the Budget and Strategic Agenda of the Science and Technology Directorate:”

“The Department’s Science and Technology Directorate has struggled and underperformed, pretty much since its inception. The Science and Technology Directorate has been criticized for being a ‘hobby shop’ where research and development are not driven by operational requirements but by the interests of the researchers.

The Government Accountability Office has identified significant financial management deficiencies within S&T. Last year the House appropriations committee referred to the Science and Technology directorate as a ‘rudderless ship’ when they decided to cut funding to the Directorate.

Well, I suppose when you have a ‘rudderless ship’ it makes sense to bring in an Admiral to try to fix the problem. I’d like to welcome you here today Admiral Cohen. I’d also like to welcome Richard Williams, the Chief Financial Officer for S&T. I don’t have to tell you that both of you have taken up quite a challenge. I am encouraged by some of the things I am seeing so far.

For example, I think the approach you are taking to reshape the directorate into a true Research, Development, Testing and Evaluation entity instead of a quasi-operational one is a good idea.

I think moving the operational components of project BioWatch into the new Office of Health Affairs, for example, was a smart move. However, while this reorganization seems like a good idea, when you are moving boxes around sometimes it’s hard to keep track of the funding of particular projects.”

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